March 20, 1970

Dear Harold (cc: GRS),

Received your mailings of 3/9 and 14, and the press release. I didn't see anything on your suit out here. Enclosed: transcript of Bonner interview on KKHI radio, notes on CE 2812, and various things you wanted returned.

I have gone through your summary of Archives correspondence, and saw nothing where I can add significant information. I am not convinced that some of the matters in your 3/13 to Rhoads are really worth pursuing. You have certainly not endeared yourselves to them, and they are obviously going to do only the bare minimum for you. If you were studying State Department files on Panama in 1920, they would be happy to answer those of your questions which, in effect, ask them to do research for you (e.g., to find out if the Commission made a copy of the Marine guidebook). Now that you have established a record of their treatment of you, I think you should focus your energies on cases where you can reasonably expect to get the items you ask for. In such cases, you will have to be extremely specific and legalistic. For example, when you ask for the citations on the SS index card for Ferrie, and his associates, there is not much chance of getting much on the latter unless you specify names. If you want to push them on getting items from other agencies, I suggest emphasizing specific items (such as missing CD's) which we can prove the Commission once had (as opposed to things they should have or "must have" had).

Your 3/6 notes on the very interesting Fisher correspondence: you suggest that the other doctors were not consulted on the destruction of the drafts. Under ordinary circumstances, each doctor would have kept a copy of his own comments on the intermediate versions, if only to satisfy himself that his suggestions were properly incorporated. Most likely, either they were told to keep no such copies, or they submitted them to Fisher or Bromley at the end, or they destroyed them themselves. Fisher calls what they did "editing" but I'm sure that more than changes in grammar were involved. Did they do this with no working papers in their possession? Hard to believe. For a report that was drafted in one day and "pulled together" in a few days, this editing took long enough - the first signatures on the final copy were March 28, one month after the examination. Who would have "informed" Fisher that the JD released the report unchanged without at the same time sending him a copy of the released report?

Five copies of the COUP appendix are in the mail to you. (Also to GRS, MEF, RB.)

Gary: thanks for your mailing of 3/7.

No time for more now. I'm getting itchy about my thesis again.

Sincerely,

Paul